

Auto/Body Line

Serving the Automotive Repair & Body Shop Industries

HOT ROD NATION Old School vs New School

by **SCOTT SOWERS**

Where have all the hot rodders gone? Used to be you couldn't swing a torque wrench around the parking lot of the local diner without hitting a Deuce Coupe, or a T-bucket. Oh sure, you still catch glimpses of them on nice Sunday afternoons or if you hit the car show circuit. And speaking of the car shows do you ever wonder who builds those fabulous rides? Wouldn't it be great if you could make a living building totally custom cars or motorcycles like you see on "Monster Garage" and "American Chopper?" You think there's any money in it? Only one way to find out, read on.

Bob and Rob Ida are a father and son team in Morganville, New Jersey who have figured out how to live a motorhead's dream. "Ida Automotive" started out building bodies and chassis for shade tree mechanics who needed a platform for their home built plants. Rob, who's 32, says "the business now concentrates on one-off custom cars either designed



on paper or by heavily modifying an existing car."

The Idas' skills have enabled them to strike deals with Ford, Volvo, and BMW to build concept cars that routinely show up in auto shows and magazine spreads. And if you build them right, Hollywood will come. Ida-built cars sit in actor Ethan Hawke's garage and one of their modified Mustangs is featured in Steven Spielberg's rendition of "The War of the Worlds." The Mustang will be piloted by a guy named Tom Cruise. Richard Dreyfuss has hung out with the guys and the Idas were also involved in the "Titus" TV series.